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Me & Rumi: The Autobiography of Shams-i Tabrizi.
Louisville, Kentucky, Fons Vitae, 2004, xxv+409 p.

Franklin Lewis



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- 1 The *Maqālāt-e Šams-e Tabrizī* (fl. Konya 1244-47) is one of the two or three most important prose texts providing us with context for the ideas expressed in the *Maṭnawī* and *Dīwān* of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. Chittick, who has previously translated from both Rūmī and his father, Bahā' al-Dīn, here presents extensive selections in translation from this difficult collection of sayings, reflections and memoirs of Šams-e Tabrizī, following the full two-volume critical edition of Moḥammad-'Alī Movahh̄ed (Tehrān, Ḥ'ārazmī, 1379/1990). The existing mss. of this work consist of notes of the disciples of Rūmī and Šams that were never properly organized or gathered into presentation format. Since the arrangement of passages in the existing mss. does not follow a sequential logic, any organization of the material is necessarily arbitrary. Chittick has chosen to group the material chronologically in three sections: "My Years Without Mawlana" (pp. 1-35), "My Path to God" (pp. 37-174) and "My Time with Mawlana" (pp. 177-306), presenting the reader with a kind of fragmentary autobiography.
- 2 The translations are scholarly and careful; where the obscurity of the text and its allusions makes the intent extremely difficult to construe, the passage has been scrupulously left out of the translation: "the final result gives us about two-thirds" of the whole *Maqālāt* (xxii). The late Annemarie Schimmel provided a short preface to the work (ix-x), and Chittick's own foreword (xi-xxv) gives a historical overview of the life of Šams and his interaction with Rūmī. Copious and erudite notes are provided to the passages (pp. 309-47), along with several indices: "Koranic verses" (pp. 348-53), "Hadiths and Sayings" (pp. 354-64), an "index and glossary of terms and people" (pp. 365-405), and a table showing the corresponding page numbers of the English translation and the page numbers of the Persian text of the *Maqālāt* (pp. 406-409).

INDEX

Thèmes : 8. Soufisme

nompropre Rumi, Shams-e Tabrizi, Mowlānā

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